

1761-1895.

First Presbyterian Church,
Baltimore, Md.

Rise and Progress,

By

Rev. Patrick Allison, D. D.

1793.

Historical Discourse,

By

Rev. John C. Mackus, D. D.

1859.

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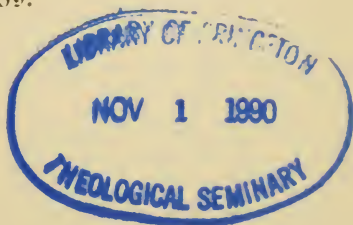
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BALTIMORE :
C. STANLEY STIRLING & CO.,
1895.

An Historical Discourse on the First Presbyterian Church, delivered on the last Sabbath of September, 1859, by the Rev. John C. Backus, D. D., fourth Pastor, having long been out of print, The Session and The Committee have reprinted it for the information of the present members of the Congregation—and have prefixed thereto an original sketch of the Rise and Progress of the Church up to 1793, as prepared by the Rev. Patrick Allison, D. D., first Pastor. The last named Paper is in the archives of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Philadelphia, and is now published for the first time.

Baltimore, December 1, 1895.

THE
RISE AND PROGRESS

—OF THE—

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

—IN—

BALTIMORE TOWN,

BY
PATRICK ALLISON,
PASTOR.

THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
BALTIMORE TOWN.

The advantageous situation of the Town for Commerce induced a few Presbyterian Families from Pennsylvania to settle in it about the year 1761, who, with two or three of the same Persuasion, that had emigrated from Europe, soon formed themselves into a religious Society, and had occasional supplies, when they assembled in private Houses, though the owners were liable to a Prosecution on this Account, as the then Province groaned under an unrighteous and *irreligious* Establishment for the Support of which all Denominations were taxed, and the Law required every House of Worship, used by Dissenters, to be

registered and licensed. They, proceeded, however, in this way undisturbed, and soon raised a small wooden Building for the more orderly Celebration of Divine Service. The Rev. Hector Alison of New Castle Presbytery, having preached among them several Months, it was proposed by some to have him settled as their minister—but the proposal did not succeed, and in the Fall of 1763, though the infant Society contained not more than eight or nine families that seemed to be permanently fixed, the Subscriber, a licensed Candidate under the Care of the second Presbytery of Philadeiphia, accepted an Invitation to remain with them a year, in the Character of a constant Supply. The Connection, thus begun, proving mutually agreeable, was prolonged and he became and continues to be their Pastor. In 1765 they purchased a Lot 80 feet by above 250, for their Church and Burying Ground, as also another contiguous, 40 Feet by 300, for a Parsonage—on the last a handsome convenient Dwelling was erected in 1780—on the first a Decent Brick Building had been finished in 1766 for holding religious assemblies, which received Enlargement in 1772, when an adjoining Lot 40 Feet Front was added to the other and their Numbers still increasing, in 1789 they were induced to remove the old Pile, and commence the

Erection of a spacious elegant Church, in nearly the same site, capable of accommodating above one thousand Hearers, which was opened in 1791, is now nearly completed, and remains a noble Monument of the Builders' generous Zeal.

The first Burying Place, which lay contiguous to the Church, having appeared insufficient, after a short Trial, and improper in other Respects, Interments in it were discontinued and two extensive Squares were enclosed for the Reception of the Dead, one on the East, and the other on the West Side of the Town, (and no such Receptacles should be in any Town), the former a liberal donation of William Fell, Esq.—the latter a purchase.

It has been proposed at different times, to form another Presbyterian Church in the Town, and raise a separate House of Worship, for which purpose a lot of ground was some years ago generously given by Col. John E. Howard; however the Design seems to be waived for the present, though there can remain no doubt but that such a Measure must become necessary in a short space.

In all public meetings for transacting Congregational Business of any kind, and these have been frequent, the utmost Harmony has prevailed among the People, nor has the Spirit of Forbearance, Candor

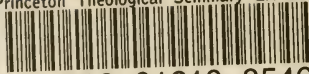
and Conciliation ever departed from them on any such occasion, and they are now a respectable flourishing Church, comprehending above one Hundred and Sixty Families. Their Secular Affairs are managed by a Committee, who meet at each others Houses in the Evening, commonly once a month.

[Signed.]

PATRICK ALLISON.

Baltimore 17 April 1793.

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